Gujarat. However, the Central Department of Tourism provides funds on the basis of projects prioritised in consultation with them. A project for construction of Yatri Niwas at Dakor was sanctioned during 1985-86 for Rs. 41.20 lakhs. Two Yatri Niwases are being operated at Ambaji by the State Government of Gujarat. However, there are a number of Dharmshalas and Guesthouses operated by private trusts.

(b) Construction of tourism infrastructure is a continuous process for the benefit of visiting tourists. During 2001-2002 a project for construction of Yatri Niwas at Somnath has been prioritised for Rs. 70.00 lakhs.

(c) The same as in (b) above.

(d) Does not arise.

Improvement of Tourism Infrastructure in Tamil Nadu

3028. SHRI KA. RA. SUBBIAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any special efforts to tap and improve the tourism infrastructure in Tamil Nadu, in particular and in other parts of the country, in general;

(b) if so, the steps taken in this regard; and

(c) whether Government would take steps to improve the facilities and come up with unique projects in tourist centre in Tamil Nadu where there is a good scope for improvement?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) Development and improvement of tourism infrastructure in the country is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments/UT Administrations. However, Central Department of Tourism provides financial assistance on the basis of projects prioritised every year in consultation with them. From VIIth Plan onwards (till 31.3.2001) 178 projects of Tamil Nadu have been sanctioned for Rs. 2837.82 lakhs.

(b) Government of India have been providing financial assistance to the State Governments/UT Administrations for development of

tourism projects and infrastructural facilities. For the year 2001-2002, a total number of 551 projects have been prioritised for the country. Out of this 30 projects for Rs. 5.14 crores have been prioritised for the State of Tamil Nadu.

(c) Every year Central Department of Tourism provides financial assistance for development and improvement of tourist infrastructure of the State/UT on the basis of projects prioritised in consultation with the State/UT Government.

Leasing out of Hotel Ashoka, Bangalore to M/s Bharat Hotels

3029. SHRI K. C. KONDAIAH: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of employees working in Hotel Ashoka, Bangalore;

(b) whether the above hotel is incurring losses;

(c) it so, the accumulated loss so far;

(d) whether Government have decided to hand over the hotel on lease basis to M/s Bharat Hotels for thirty years;

(e) if so, the terms and conditions of lease;

(f) the reasons for giving it on lease to M/s Bharat Hotels; and

(g) the steps taken to protect the interests of employees?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) The total number of employees in Hotel Ashok Bangalore and Airport Restaurant, Bangalore together as on 31.10.2001 were 388.

(b) and (c) The Hotel and Airport Ashok Restaurant together earned profit of Rs.1.30 crores during 2000-01 and there has been no accumulated loss.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) Salient features of the terms and conditions of the Lease are given in the Statement. (*See* below).

(f) The Disinvestment Commission in its 1st Report (February 1997) had categorized India Tourism Development Corporation